

# Quarterly NEWS-LETTER

OF THE BOOK CLUB OF  
CALIFORNIA

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## NOTES ON PUBLICATIONS

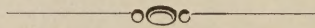
by ALBERT M. BENDER, Chairman, Publication Committee

DURING the remainder of 1934, the Club's publishing programme promises to be unusually active. With two books definitely scheduled for early publication, with arrangements for a third about to be concluded, and with yet another in active preparation, the coming months will witness some notable additions to the Club's list.

Within the next few weeks members will receive announcements giving full details of two new publications: a new edition of Bret Harte's famous "The Heathen Chinee" from the press of John Henry Nash, with ten full-page illustrations by Phil Little; and "South Seas

Incunabula," a history of the very early pioneer press at Tahiti, with a bibliography of its publications, printed by The Grabhorn Press. In subject matter both these works are worthy of places of honor on members' shelves, while the names of the printers who are designing them are sufficient guaranty of their excellence as examples of typographic art.

Complete descriptions of the above titles will be contained in their forthcoming announcements; here I shall confine myself to a brief mention of the remaining two: "Bierce and the Poe Hoax," by Carroll D. Hall, and an as yet untitled collection of the writing of Prentice Mulford. Mention was made of the "Poe Hoax" in the June News-Letter, and I shall merely add that the book is to be printed by The Windsor Press in its customary fine style, that the edition will be 250 copies, and that the usual announcement will be sent members shortly in advance of publication. The Mulford volume will consist of a varied collection of the writings of that gifted but now little-known California writer who, in the '60s, enjoyed a reputation equal to those of Bret Harte and Mark Twain. The material, all previously unpublished in book form, is being selected by Franklin D. Walker, who will contribute a lengthy biographical essay on Mulford to the volume. Further details of this very interesting publication will appear in the December News-Letter.



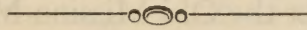
## THE MINING TOWNS

WHEN this number of the News-Letter reaches members the Mining Towns Series will be nearing completion. Ten of the twelve parts have been distributed;



parts eleven and twelve will follow during September and October, and the series will end in November with the distribution of a folder which will serve as a title-page to the set and will contain, in addition to a foreword and table of contents, a reproduction of an early map of the gold fields. Members are reminded again that the slipcases designed to contain and preserve the series are now ready (a descriptive folder will be sent on request); also that a few sets of the series are still available, at \$5.00 for the set.

Comment of members on this venture and the widespread general interest it has aroused have been most gratifying. So favorable has been its reception that plans are now being made to follow this first series with a second. The latter will begin in January and continue monthly throughout 1935. Careful consideration has been given to choosing of the subject for this second series, a tentative decision has been reached, and final details are being worked out. The plan will be announced and fully described in the December News-Letter. Meantime we shall merely state that members will find this second series fully as interesting and desirable as the first.



¶ Some statistics concerning membership: New members elected since January 1: 41. Losses during this same period: by death, 1; by resignation, 2; written off, 1. Net gain: 37. The encouraging thing about this showing is that it has been accomplished, not by an active "membership drive," but almost entirely through the interest of members, who have pointed out to friends that the Club is performing a worth-while service to collectors, and forwarded the names of those who wished to join. The Club is sincerely grateful for this friendly cooperation; may it continue until the remaining vacancies in the roll are filled.

## CALIFORNIA'S FIRST LIBRARY

by THE REVEREND JAMES CULLETON, D.D.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Father Junipero Serra died at Carmel Mission on August 28, 1784, and the recent sesquicentennial ceremonies paid appropriate tribute to this courageous founder of the California Missions. The Club is happy at this time to present the following paper on California's first library, which was founded by Father Serra at the old Carmel Mission. Dr. Culleton's researches into the history of this old collection, his admirable work in reassembling the long-scattered books, and the ingenuity of his methods of identifying the volumes in the original collection, will be of particular interest to Club members. This article originally appeared in the "Central California Register," and is here reprinted in slightly condensed form by special permission of the author.*

WHEN Fray Junipero Serra first set foot on the promised land of Monterey the erstwhile philosophy professor carried in his baggage a few well worn tomes. The discovery a year ago of the key to the old collection and the recovery of scattered volumes smack of the tales of Sherlock Holmes.

Scattered about the modern San Carlos parish library were 174 old Spanish and Latin books. Since all were dated prior to 1830 it was assumed that they had been about the place since the time of the padres and so they were assembled for the Old Mission Museum.

Catalogue marks on 53 of the volumes were considered those of the library of San Fernando at Mexico City. This was because most of the books showed evidence of having been once in that college. An insignificant worm, however, upset this notion and showed that the marks had been made by Father Serra or by one of his successors at San Carlos. This worm was of the book variety, and it came to life in the center of a certain volume. Being of the species that travel in a straight line, he pro-



ceeded through half of the book in which he was hatched and through three others that had stood beside it on an ancient shelf. His larval container filled with ash shows that his life ended as he began to bore through the second cover of the fourth book. Strange to say, these four books, though not of one set, were numbered consecutively. This means that the worm did his work in the library which catalogued them.

The little insect proved, moreover, that this library was that of Carmel Mission. The padres were in a habit of using as book marks any scraps of paper that might be lying about the study table. One of these scraps was dated 1836, another 1839. Through that dated 1836 the worm had gone, while through the other there was no hole. This meant that between these years and, therefore, long after books had ceased to come from San Fernando, the books were in catalogue order on the Carmel shelves.

Once it was known that the marks designated books of Monterey's first library, it was easy to learn the approximate number of volumes in the oldest section of the collection, to recognize tomes that had strayed and to work up the enthusiasm necessary to regain the missing treasures. A thorough search of the Monterey and Carmel rectories netted 17 additional works. The accidental discovery of a fifty-year-old bound volume of the "Ave Maria" at Salinas rectory led to further recoveries. It recalled to Father Gay a certain Father Murphy, long since gone to his reward. This reverend father was a great student and wrote much for the "Ave Maria." He had been located successively at Salinas, Watsonville, Santa Cruz, Hollister and San Juan Bautista, and then had been transferred to Southern California.

None of the old books was found at Salinas but the attic and library of the Santa Cruz rectory revealed 67 volumes. Through the kindness of Father P. J. McGrath these were sent to Monterey; several of the books were also found by Father McGrath in the old Watsonville Parish House. On the shelves of the San Juan Bautista library eight volumes were discovered. Eight other old books given in exchange redeemed these wanderers. Other substantial additions followed. From a private library 177 volumes were returned at one time. One convent yielded six and another five. Hollister furnished two. All of which means that today the old collection numbers 458 volumes, of which 143 bear the San Carlos catalogue marks.

With all these books on hand, a more thorough study of the old library is possible and the conclusions therefrom are interesting. In the first place, three of the returned books verified beyond doubt the testimony of the worm, for these are inscribed as gifts made by residents of or visitors to Monterey. Two were given to the Mission by the La Perouse expedition of 1786, and one was the gift of Governor Borica. Since all three bear the characteristic marks, the cataloguing was evidently done in Monterey.

The oldest section of the library, which is the catalogued section, consists of works collected between 1770 and some undetermined date from 1798 to 1803. The cataloguing was done by none other than Fray Fermin Francisco Lasuen, President of the California Missions from 1785 to 1803. The note in Governor Borica's (1794 to 1800) gift book was written by Fray Mariano Payeras (July 1796 to September 1798), for the handwriting corresponds with that found in the record books. The



ink used to make the note is black while that most commonly used in the records is brownish. Toward the middle of 1798, however, Fray Mariano used for his records a black ink. This would indicate that Borica presented his volume between June and September of 1798—the latter being the date of the padre's departure from Monterey. Since it is a catalogued book, the cataloguing must have been done after June 1798. On the other hand, Governor Sola (1815-1818) also donated a book. Fray Vincente Sarria makes the note. This book, however, is not catalogued. All of which makes it evident that the cataloguing was done between June 1798 and June 1818. A comparison of the handwritten numbers on the book backs with those found during these years in the baptismal records shows beyond a doubt that the hand of Lasuen had numbered the books. Since he died June 26, 1803, the cataloguing was done between June 1798 and June 1803, for all numberings are in the same hand.

The approximate number of books in the library at the time of Lasuen's death was 410. They were arranged without regard to contents on four shelves or in four sections. This is evident from the catalogue marks, which are made according to the old European system. A Roman numeral indicates the shelf or section and an Arabic numeral under it represents the location of the book on the shelf. The highest number from each shelf in the library at present is: I/79; II/119; III/113; IV/84. The marks were made by painting a small field of white on the book back, upon which the numbers were written with black India ink.

It is very difficult to know just how many books came to Monterey between the years 1803 and 1834, for these

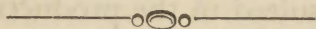
are uncatalogued. Rather complicated comparisons, however, indicate that their number did not exceed 405. At present there are 315 of them in the Old Mission Library. A difficulty also presents itself when one tries to prove which of the old books located belong in this uncatalogued collection. Sometimes the name of the mission is written on the flyleaf but more often it is not. It is sometimes helpful to know the sources from which books reached their present whereabouts, and often the scraps used as book marks are of great assistance. The most interesting clues will likely be found in the worm holes that are often encountered in the books. Two types of bookworm thrive in Monterey, and a bit more study of books from other missions may prove that these types are found only on the Monterey peninsula.

There is little likelihood that all the missing volumes will ever be returned, but undoubtedly many more will eventually find their way home. The whereabouts of a considerable number of these is known, as are the names and catalogue numbers of 72 other volumes of the old collection which have not yet been located. The latter, with two exceptions, can be replaced from the stocks of Spanish or Mexican dealers in old books. Eleven uncatalogued books are also known and ten of these can be replaced. This leaves 184 catalogued volumes and 59 uncatalogued entirely unaccounted for. Still there are in California many collections of old books that have not been examined, and there are two important clues that may lead to the recovery of some 50 volumes now missing.

It may be of interest to add that Father Serra himself started the library, as is evidenced by the fact that some



25 of the catalogued volumes bear in the handwriting of Serra the note, "Library of the Mission of San Carlos de Monterey," or "Don —— gave this book to the Library of the Mission of San Carlos de Monterey." It may be safely estimated that by the time of Serra's death there were about 50 volumes on the old shelves.



## MEMORIAL

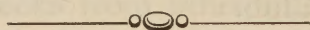
SINCE the appearance of the last issue of this quarterly, death has removed two figures of such importance in the world of Western books and literature that their passing calls forth a tribute, however brief and inadequate, from the Club.

WILLIAM ANDREWS CLARK, JR. In the sudden passing of William Andrews Clark, Jr., at his summer home in Montana on June 14 last, the West lost one of the very greatest of its book collectors, and the Club a warm friend and loyal supporter. The range of Will Clark's cultural interests and the extent of his benefactions in these fields were too wide and varied to be listed here. In the world of books alone he early became a vital factor, and he continued to the end to exercise a stimulating influence that will hardly grow less with the passage of the years. His splendid library at Los Angeles, which he bequeathed to the state, will long remain a monument not only to his life-long love of books but to the soundness and discrimination of his literary judgment.

MARY AUSTIN. With the death of Mary Austin at her home in Santa Fe on July 13, America lost a gracious, intelligent and great hearted friend. Both as a woman and as a writer, she combined keen intellectual percep-

tion and breadth of vision with an inherent love of beauty in such degree that she everywhere came to be recognized as an authoritative intellectual force. A true daughter of the West, her studies of its aboriginals and their folklore made her a foremost authority in these fields, while her perception of the beauties of its "land of little rain" resulted in the production of books that permanently enrich Western literature. Mary Austin wrote of her chosen subjects with understanding, with imagination, and above all with a brilliant clarity of thought and felicity of expression that assure her a place among the truly great literary artists of the West.

—Albert M. Bender.



#### ON A COMMERCIAL THEME

MEMBERS frequently write the Club for information concerning its publications. Naturally, this correspondence is welcome and all inquiries receive prompt attention. To one type of question, however, it is impossible to give a specific answer. When members write asking the current value of out-of-print Club publications, we can only recommend that such inquiries be sent to rare book dealers, most of whom are glad to undertake to locate desired items and to quote prices. Out-of-print publications appear from time to time both in auction records and in dealers' catalogues. An examination of these discloses, of course, a wide variation in price, but practically always the amount quoted is substantially higher than the original published price, in some cases from three to five times as much. Thus, although the Club refrains from attempting to place a "market value" on its out-of-print publications, it can with per-



fect safety point out that they are always worth *at least* what members originally paid for them.

Most inquiries of this type come from members who wish to complete their collection of Club publications. For these, and for others who may be considering adding to their collections, the Club has prepared a check-list of out-of-print publications. A copy will be forwarded on request. The collector who sets out to assemble a complete set of the Club publications can do so, with a little patience, but he should be warned that many of the out-of-print titles are scarce and—even in these times—expensive. The prudent member will begin by acquiring the titles which the Club still has available, particularly those of which only a small number of copies remain. By so doing, he will receive clean, new copies at their original prices, whereas if he delays until the titles he wants are out of print he faces the probability of paying a premium for copies in less than perfect condition.

The following is a complete list of the publications on hand. Those numbering less than 25 copies are indicated by an asterisk. Members who plan to order any of these titles are reminded that there is no better time than the present.

Title and Author	Printer	Price
*The Vision of Mirzah, Addison	<i>John Henry Nash</i>	\$ 2.00
*California, Coolbrith	<i>John Henry Nash</i>	2.00
*Nationalism, Tagore	<i>Norwood Press</i>	2.00
Odes & Sonnets, Smith	<i>Taylor &amp; Taylor</i>	3.00
The Kasidah, Burton	<i>John Henry Nash</i>	8.00
Three Tales, Bierce	<i>John Henry Nash</i>	3.00
Lilith: A Dramatic Poem, Sterling	<i>Taylor &amp; Taylor</i>	6.00
A Gracious Visitation, Dawson	<i>The Grabhorn Press</i>	4.00
Prayer: A Poem, Field	<i>The Grabhorn Press</i>	1.50

*Oscar Weil: Letters & Papers	<i>The Grabborn Press</i>	10.00
Continent's End: An Anthology of California Poets	<i>John Henry Nash</i>	15.00
*Philibiblon of Richard de Bury	<i>The Grabborn Press</i>	10.00
*The Gentle Cynic, tr. by Jastrow	<i>The Grabborn Press</i>	12.00
An Invocation, Bierce	<i>John Henry Nash</i>	8.00
The Final Stanza, Browne	<i>Johnck &amp; Seeger</i>	3.50
The Persistence of Poetry, Bynner	<i>The Windsor Press</i>	6.00
Abraham Lincoln: A Memorial Address, Bancroft	<i>John Henry Nash</i>	10.00
*The Nuremberg Chronicle, Bullen	<i>John Henry Nash</i>	15.00
Mr. Strahan's Dinner Party, Newton	<i>John Henry Nash</i>	15.00
*The Origin of the Celebrated Jumping Frog, Lewis	<i>The Grabborn Press</i>	6.00
A Treatise of Tobacco, Venner	<i>The Windsor Press</i>	6.00
Sir Walter Scott: 1832-1932, Buchan & Van Antwerp	<i>Johnck &amp; Seeger</i>	3.00
*The City That Has Fallen, Reedy	<i>Johnck &amp; Seeger</i>	1.00
A Diary of a Visit to Molokai, Stoddard	<i>The Grabborn Press</i>	2.25
California in 1602, Vizcaino	<i>The Grabborn Press</i>	3.00

¶ A member suggests that the News-Letter print reviews of new books of typographic interest produced in the West; another that it inaugurate a department of letters from members. Both suggestions are excellent; unluckily, however, these and other innovations must wait until Club finances permit further additions to the number of pages of the quarterly. The solution: a continued increase in the membership roll.

¶ Because requests for copies are still being received, the Club wishes to report that the supply both of "A William Morris Souvenir," presented to members during March, and of "A Portrait of Agustin V. Zamorano," distributed in June, has been completely exhausted.

¶ The joint sale of the publications of six American book clubs, which ended June 30, proved highly satisfactory both in the number who took advantage of this exchange of book-buying privileges and in the amount of publications sold by each of the participating clubs. The success of this venture increases the likelihood of further cooperation between the private book collectors clubs of the country.